[CIRCULAR ON THE TERCENTENARY OF ST. ALOYSIUS.]

TO THE REV. PASTORS OF THE DIOCESE OF CHATHAM,

REV. AND DEAR FATHERS:

On the 21st of June, this year (1891), occurs the Tercentenary of the holy death, at the age of 23 years and 3 months, of the angelic youth, St. Aloysius Gonzaga.

This young Saint, both as a holy Religious of the Society of Jesus, and during all his boyhood before he entered the Novitiate, was a model of sanctity and wisdom; the many miraculous cures soon after his death, obtained through his intercession, and his canonization, testify to this. Therefore he has been named the Patron of young Students, and held up as a model for imitation and as the Patron Saint of all young persons, especially on account of his angelic chastity, by the Sovereign Pontiffs and all Pastors and Directors of youth, for the last three hundred years.

Hence our present Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII, has gladly acceded to the petitions made to him, to sanction and encourage in a special manner this year, the celebration of the young Saint's Tercentenary Feast, by holy Pilgrimages of those who can go to his Shrine in Rome where his body lies, and by devotional visits to churches at home, throughout Christendom, during the Novena before his Feast, and the Triduum including the day of his Feast, and by enrolling their names in an Album to be placed on his tomb, containing the names of children and their Parents who wish to consecrate their LITTLE ONES under the Patronage of St. Aloysius.

The Holy Father in his Apostolic Brief dated January 1st, 1891, grants a Plenary Indulgence to all the Faithful who on any day of the said Triduum of the Feast will receive Holy Communion after having made Sacramental Confession, and who will have visited the Church and prayed therein according to the intentions of the Pope, at least on five days of the Novena, or on all three of the days of the Triduum. Other partial Indulgences (without requiring communion as a condition) are granted to those who perform the pilgrimage, or get their names enrolled in the Album, or assist at the Novena or the Triduum. But the Plenary Indulgence requires the usual conditions of Confession and Communion, as well as the visits to pray in the Church for the intentions of the Pope. All these Idulgences are applicable to the Souls in Purgatory.

You have already seen, in the Catholic Newspapers, the text of the Holy Father's Letter. It is to call your attention to the same, and to express my entire consent and authorization that said Triduum and Novena and Solemn Celebration of the Feast of St. Aloysius, with the Indulgences announced, be held in our Diocese wherever the Missionary Rectors find it convenient or practicable to have them.

To train up the LITTLE ONES of their flocks in christian doctrine and piety is an object dear to the heart of every good Pastor, and the Chief Pastor of the Christian Fold, the Pope, sets the example and encourages the other Pastors to "feed the lambs." The great "Good Shepherd," Christ, says: "Whatever you do to the least of these you do to me!"

Begging God to bless you and your labors and all your Flock—especially the LITTLE ONES!

I remain, Rev. and Dear Fathers, Faithfully your humble servant in J. C.

† JAMES ROGERS, Bishop of Chatham.

Given at Chatham, N. B., Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, June 5, 1891.